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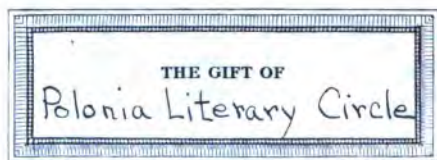
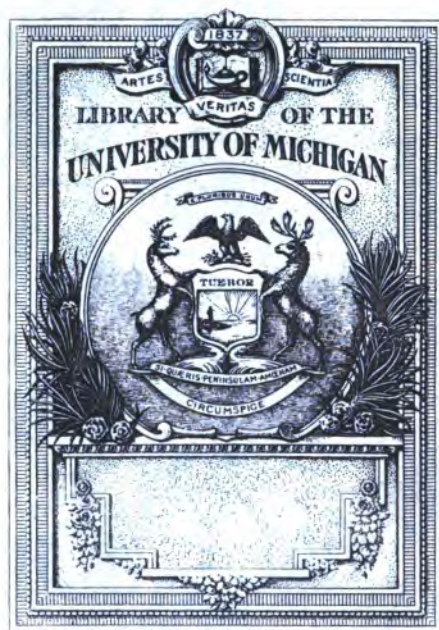
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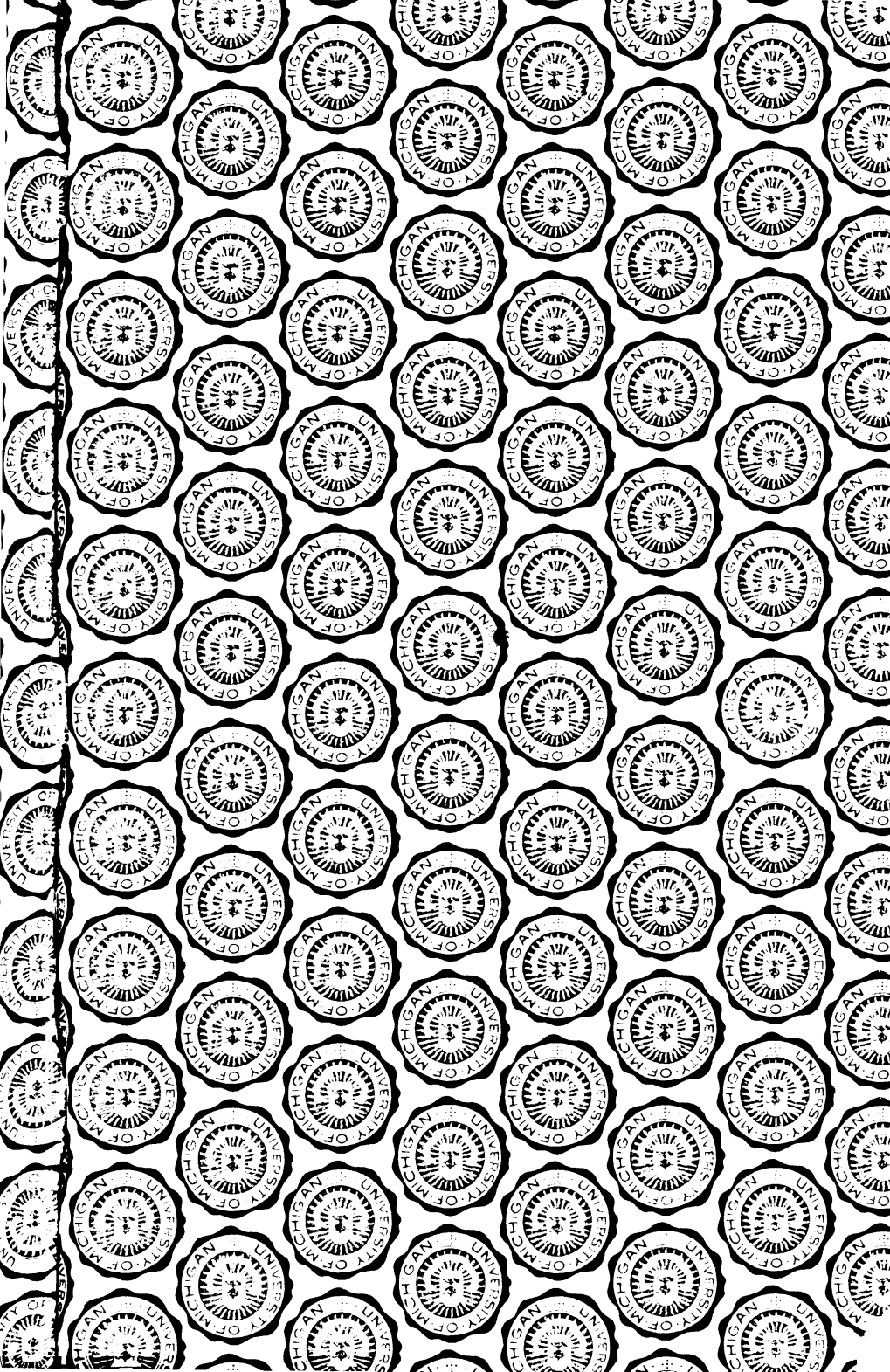
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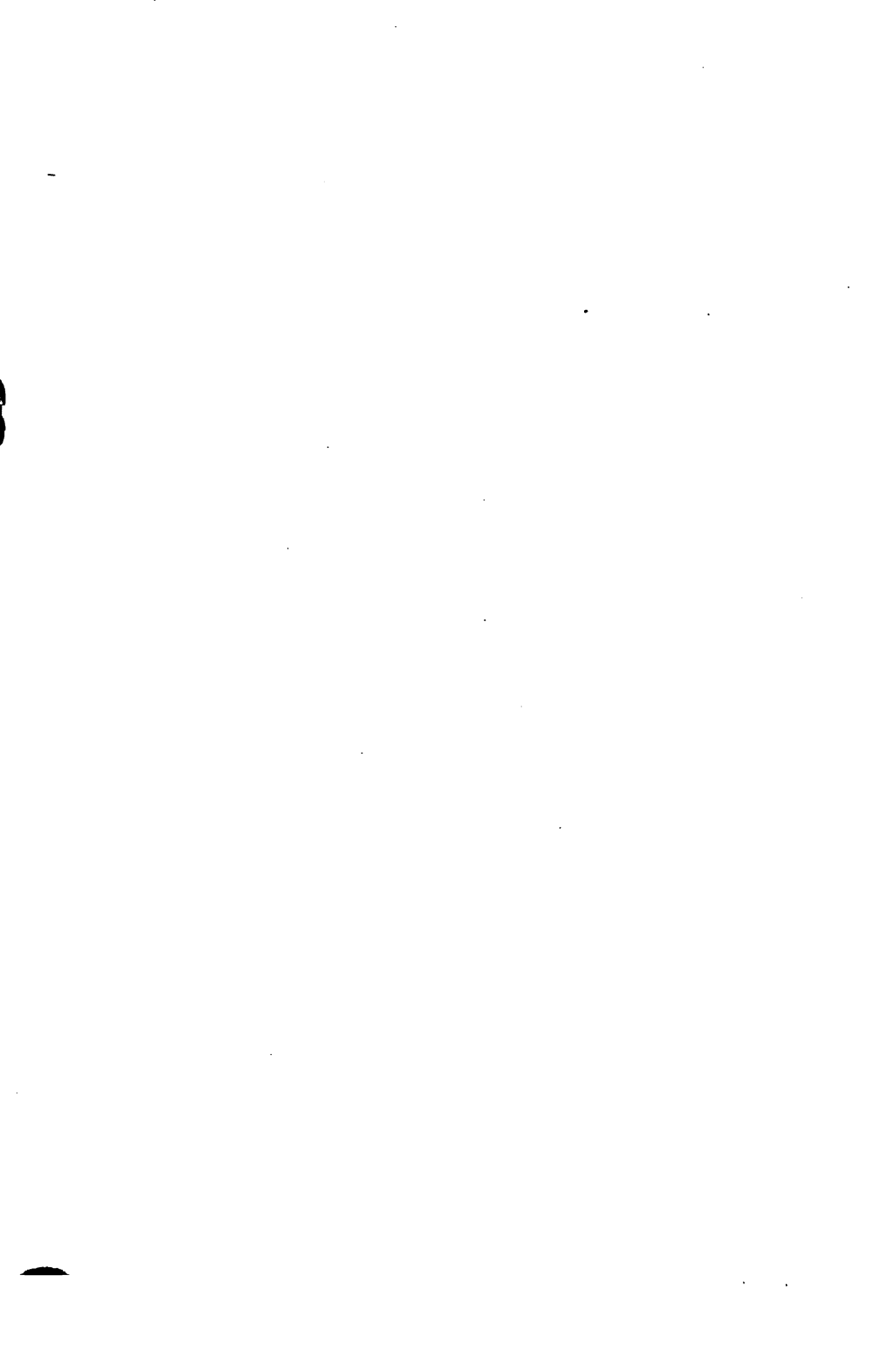
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**INTELLECTUAL POLAND**



# INTELLECTUAL POLAND

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT CAMBRIDGE  
ON MAY 19, 1916

BY

LEON LITWINSKI

WITH A PREFACE

BY

THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.



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Polonia Literary Circle  
247  
25-28-1928

## PREFACE

BY VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.

THE fortunes of the Polish people have long engaged the sympathetic interest of the peoples of Britain and France. We have always deplored that First Partition of Poland which was prompted by the unscrupulous ambition of Frederick II of Prussia. We grieve over the subsequent calamities of a gifted and gallant race, many of whose leaders had found a refuge among us. Within the last few years our interest has been rekindled by hope, for the prospect is brighter to-day than it has been for three generations, and we now look forward both to her recovering a united life under institutions calculated to meet her long-cherished aspirations, and to a permanent reconciliation of the Poles with other great branches of the Slavonic stock from which a series of unfortunate events have divided them in feeling. It is natural and proper that we in England should desire to be better informed regarding the history of the Polish People, and especially regarding their intellectual achievements. We know how much they have accomplished in poetry and music, as well as in science and letters. The

*names of Copernicus and Mickiewicz and Chopin are those most familiar to us out of a long and brilliant list. But we need to know much else, and to have a far more complete picture presented of the whole history of the national mind and of its varied efforts in the field of creative literature. It is a history which is all the more interesting because it enables those who apply philosophical methods to history to appreciate the relative importance and the peculiar character of the two external factors which have borne their part in the development of thought and art among the Slavonic peoples; I mean the influence of the Latin and Teutonic West upon the Poles and the Czechs, and the influence upon the Russian races of the East Roman and Hellenic culture of the Ægean countries. We friends of Poland are glad, therefore, to see this book and the series of which it forms a part, brought before the English public, and I cannot doubt that it will not only be welcomed by scholars, but will also find a large circle of readers among those who have honoured the memory of Polish heroes of the older time, from John Sobieski down to Kosciuszko, and who have admired the tenacity with which the nation has clung to its ancient traditions and has preserved its ancient love of liberty.*

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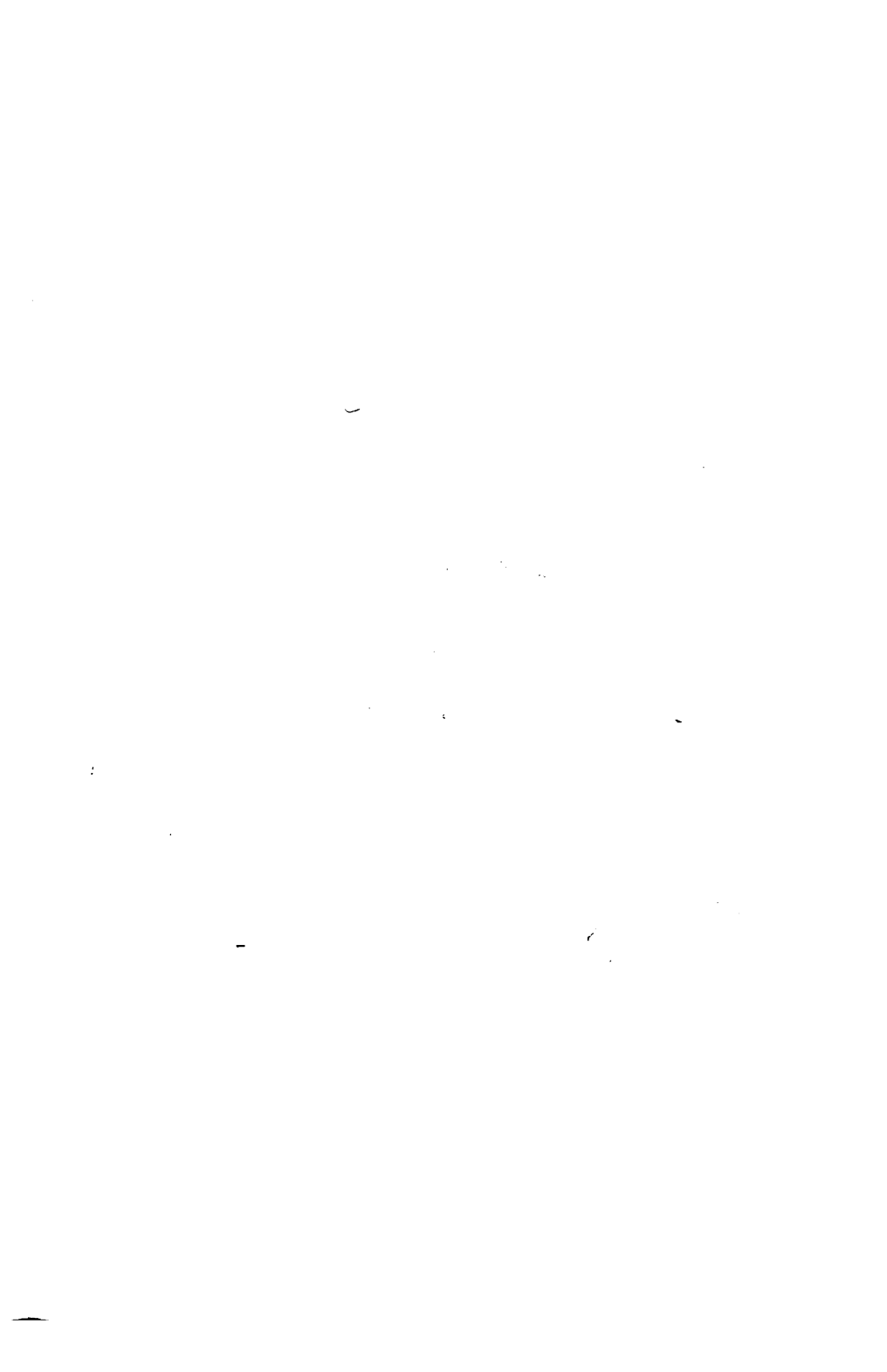
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# INTELLECTUAL POLAND

## I

### THE CONDITIONS OF INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN POLAND

No one would readily deny that the intellectual life,<sup>1</sup> like all other forms of life, must be considered as affected by the particular conditions of its existence and development. Unfortunately, however, it is not very easy for the free citizens of these islands to realize the conditions which determine the expression of thought in fettered Poland. Just let us imagine for a moment three different enemies dividing up Great Britain amongst them, and let us further suppose that the centres of her intellectual life, such as Oxford, Cambridge, London, Edinburgh—to which in Poland correspond Cracow,<sup>2</sup> Lemberg,<sup>3</sup> and Vilno<sup>4</sup>—are isolated to such an extent that the establishment of any,

<sup>1</sup> The term "intellectual" is used here chiefly with reference to the capacity for the higher forms of conceptual thought. The Intellect is often opposed to other fundamental functions of the human soul, namely, to the Will and the Feeling.

<sup>2</sup> In Polish Kraków. <sup>3</sup> In Polish Lwów. <sup>4</sup> In Polish Wilno.

free intercourse between London and Oxford, for example, becomes infinitely more difficult than to have dealings with Indians or the Senegalese. Add to these suppositions the further enormity, that two of these enemies, not satisfied with seeing their victim living an abnormal existence in each of the three parts of a single body, make a crowning effort to destroy the intellectual life at the very source of its being, by attacking one of the most marvellous instruments of mental production, which is called national individuality. They refuse to it those fundamental rights which are conducive to the development of the human personality, such as the right to personal freedom, the right of freedom of discussion and the liberty of the press, the right of public meeting, etc. All methods that contribute to this malevolent end will be considered fair in the estimation of these hostile Powers. They allow themselves such licence in the prosecution of their purposes that they pillage museums, burn and carry off libraries and national collections, and even appropriate scientific instruments, including the fittings of an astronomical observatory. Imagine, lastly, that the intellectual exponents of the comity of nations—i.e. the international congresses, which are generally regarded as representative of human dignity and the idea of progress, and as opposed to plunderers and the forces of reaction—imagine that these very intellectual exponents, so far from protesting against these incredible enormities, prefer the complicity which is undoubtedly associated with

a refusal to allow the delegates of the tortured country to take a part in their debates as a separate and distinct nation.

Sad to say, this is no imaginary portrait. It is only, too true. The country on which Europe has imposed the conditions just described is Poland.

Truly there is need here of the pen of a literary artist rather than that of a scholar, to paint the terrible and affecting picture of the conditions in which Polish thought must perforce move, not to advance, but merely to keep itself alive—to protect itself against the sentence of systematic and merciless extermination passed upon it by the enemies of Poland more than a century ago.

This is why any one wishing to give foreigners some idea of the intellectual life of Poland must always appear first of all in the character of an accuser, and draw up a long indictment, too long, certainly, to form the subject of this publication. We shall therefore confine ourselves to quoting here a few facts in illustration of our statement.

*Intercourse between Poles and the 'Repressions of the Partitioning Powers.*—By a law of 1906, freedom of association was granted to the Russian Empire, including the Kingdom of Poland. Three months after the new law was proclaimed there was founded in Warsaw the Society, *Macierz* ("Mother of Schools"). An announcement of its

fall will be found in the following telegram, which appeared in *The Times* of December 19, 1907:—

. . . According to the *Russ*, the “Macierz” during its two years of existence has formed 781 committees, enlisted 120,000 members, including all classes of the population, has applied for permission for 1,247 schools, of which 651 have been authorized, has educated 36,000 children, and has this year received subscriptions aggregating 1,000,000 roubles (£100,000). An assembly of delegates of the local committees was held recently in Warsaw. The “Macierz” was fined 3,000 roubles (£300) by the Governor-General on the complaint of the German Consul that three Poles from Posen attended the meeting. Four days later the “Macierz” was closed. . . .

It ought not to be inferred that the “Macierz” was closed because the German Consul complained. There were other causes as well. The fact shows only, that intercourse between the Poles on questions of their public life and interests is severely repressed by mutual understanding of the partitioning Governments.

*Removal of Polish Libraries by Russia and Prussia.*—By way of opening the subject of the libraries of the capital of Russia, M. Eugene Morel, the author of the famous work “Bibliothèques,” begins thus: “Saint-Pétersbourg a des richesses uniques, il a même toute la Pologne.” There is a great truth in these words, for if Russia does not in reality possess all Polish territories, at least half the books collected by Poles during the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth century, have



been carried away to Russia. If it is true that collections of books and works of art of conquered nations are confiscated and removed, we must confess at the same time that this mode of procedure has never been more generally applied than in respect to Poland, and never more systematically carried out than in the conquest of Poland by Russia. It was begun in 1772, by the transportation to St. Petersburg of the private collection of books belonging to the princely house of Radziwill. But it was the removal of the Zaluski Public Library, opened in Warsaw in 1747, which was the most terrible loss to Poland. This library was founded by Joseph Andre Zaluski, Bishop of Kieff. At the time of opening it contained nearly 200,000 volumes. By 1774 the number of books in the library was brought up to 400,000 volumes. This library was therefore at that time the largest in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

After the occupation of Warsaw by the Russian General Souvoroff, the Zaluski Library, which was under the administration of the Commission of Education (a Polish institution which was the first Board of Education in Europe), was removed in 1795 to St. Petersburg, where it became the nucleus of the present Imperial Public Library, which was then founded. According to Russian authorities, the

<sup>1</sup> According to A. Franklin, "Guide dans les Bibliothèques de Paris" (1908), amongst the libraries of Paris the "Nationale" contained in 1722, 98,000 vols.; in 1790, 153,000 vols.; in 1795, 475,000 vols.; that of Ste. Geneviève in 1716, 45,000 vols.; in 1791, 58,000 vols.

collection which reached St. Petersburg numbered only 262,000 volumes, 120,000 pamphlets, 11,000 manuscripts, and 24,000 engravings. The remainder must have been lost through the haste with which the library was removed, and only a portion could be saved by some bibliophiles who managed to bribe the Cossacks escorting the convoy.<sup>1</sup>

The struggle between Russia and Poland in 1831 served as a new opportunity for the transportation of the Polish libraries in a body to the shores of the Neva. Warsaw alone then contributed more than 170,000 volumes to the Imperial Public Library. At the same time the library of the Czartoryski princes at Puławy, containing 40,000 very choice books, was also added to the collections of the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg. The collections of the Plock Academy, numbering nearly 42,000 volumes, were divided between St. Petersburg and Moscow. In addition, the Library of the Cadet Corps at Kalisz and that of the Princes Sapieha at Doroczyn followed the same road northward.

The end was not yet reached. In 1866, after the

<sup>1</sup> See Olenine, Director of the St. Petersburg Imperial Library, "Essay on the New Bibliographic Order."

The Abbé Georgel, secretary of the French Embassy in Vienna, in his "*Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des événements de la fin du 18me siècle*," describes the manner in which the packing up of the library was effected "by a horde of Cossacks." Among other incidents he tells how a beautiful book of engravings was cut in half by the Cossacks because it was too large for the box.

monasteries were finally abolished in the Kingdom of Poland, the Government entered into possession of their libraries, dispatching a great number of their books to St. Petersburg.

A part of the private library of King Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski found safe quarters at Astrachan, where it belongs at present to the local Orthodox Church seminary.

At the commencement of the present war seventy chests containing valuable prints were carried away from the library of the Warsaw University to Moscow, thus depriving this library of what escaped from danger even in 1831.

The Prussian Government proceeded along the same lines, by removing to Berlin between 1835 and 1839 the libraries of the monasteries of the Grand Duchy of Posen.

*The Fate of Prince Jablonowski's Scientific Endowment.*—But the most scandalous example of German hostility towards the development of Polish thought may be found in the case of Prince Joseph A. Jablonowski's Scientific Endowment.<sup>1</sup> Prince Joseph, a Polish magnate, gave in 1768 a donation in cash with a view to encouraging Polish science and Polish scientists. This donation was accepted by the University of Leipzig. In 1774 it received the royal

<sup>1</sup> A. Kraushar, "W sprawie fundacyi naukowej J. A. Jablonowskiego," 1911.

sanction of Frederick Augustus,<sup>1</sup> with special guarantees that the will of the donor should be held sacred. To-day the endowment still exists, but the University of Leipzig has entirely changed its application. It no longer serves for the encouragement of Polish science. Poles are deliberately excluded from its management. The essays must be presented exclusively in German. Such action would normally come under Sect. 87 of the German Code of August 18, 1896. Unfortunately, there is no chance that the law will be applied in this case.

*International Congress of Neurologists, Alienists, and Psychologists, and the Poles.*—A fortnight before the War broke out the well-known Polish physician Professor Henryk Halban of Lemberg sent to the Press the following decision:—

In the name of and in concert with my colleagues who formed part of the Select Committee of the International Congress of Neurologists, Alienists, and Psychologists at Berne (Warsaw: represented by Messrs. Flatau, Radziwillowicz, Weryho; Posen: Szuman; Cracow: Heinrich, Piltz, Wachholz, Zanistowski; Lemberg: Twardowski, Sieradzki, Halban), I beg to inform the societies and institutions interested in that Conference that we have unanimously resolved: (1) not to take part in the Conference, and (2) to request the striking out of our names from the list of the Organizing Committee. At the same time we beg of all our colleagues who intended to take part in the Conference not to come to Berne. We arrived

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<sup>1</sup> "Fundatio perpetua præmiorum viris doctis quotannis distribuendorum" (König. Saechs. Hauptstaatsarchiv Originalurkunde, No. 10538).

at these resolutions in consequence of the fact that the Central Committee at Berne, which at the beginning proposed to us of its own accord a separate Polish Committee, later on, at the request put forward by German medical societies, without any agreement with us, set aside the Polish Committee and included its members in the particular committees of the countries which have partitioned Poland. Further particulars concerning our correspondence with the Central Committee at Berne will be brought to public notice at a very early date.

LEMBERG,  
12th July, 1914.

Are we to conclude from instances like the one just cited that to the mind of twentieth-century members of international congresses the prospect of a banquet honoured by the presence of a high official in the person of a Minister or an Ambassador is more valuable than the humiliation of Poland?

*M. Delcassé and M. Henryk Sienkiewicz.*—But Europe refuses to recognize, not only the individuality of the science of Poland, but also that of her literature. Some years ago M. Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs for France, wrote a letter to Henryk Sienkiewicz, in which he announced that the French Government had decided to confer a distinction on that eminent "Russian author" by naming him in the Legion of Honour. It was only when Henryk Sienkiewicz had expressed his great astonishment that the militant French Radical should consider him a "Russian" author, that M. Delcassé agreed to correct this error. For the Poles

it was almost a victory—a good reason for placing in the French Radicals their hopes of a brighter future!

*Byron, John Stuart Mill, and the Warsaw Censor.*  
—Finally, as another illustration of the conditions under which Polish intellectual life has to struggle for its existence it may be mentioned that among the books prohibited by the Warsaw censor were those of such authors as Byron and John Stuart Mill!

After all these examples it will be easier to understand the meaning of the following words written by Boleslawicki:—

The opposition between inward feelings and outward conditions, between the burning faith of the heart and the crushing tyranny of the commonplace day, has reached with us a state of tragic tension, upsetting the balance of delicate natures.

Why should the spirit of politics and diplomacy get the upper hand of the spirit of justice? Why should the noble inspirations and persevering efforts of good and honest men be wasted in the struggle with baseness? The Polish nation has been deprived of the conditions indispensable for the expression of its intuitions, capabilities, and powers.\*

A Polish publicist, speaking recently of the unusual conditions under which Polish national life has to develop, said:—

We have been born, we are living and acting, so to speak, in the crater of a volcano which ever threatens us with an

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\* Boleslawicki, "Kwestja Polska" (1899).

irruption, and which now and then throws out streams of fire and molten lava. We have never enjoyed, like other countries, the happiness of work conducted under the protection of a lasting peace. We are accustomed to see around us graves and ruins. Unlike many other countries, we erect our institutions and perform our tasks with the conviction that they will sooner or later be swept away by our enemies, and that we shall be obliged to rebuild them or to perform them over and over again.

This work may be compared with that of an ant persistently repairing an ant-hill whilst her cruel and unscrupulous pillagers are destroying all the results of her toil.

The Polish citizen needs a great deal of adaptability to keep his footing in the forefront of civilization while his enemies are continually trying to take away the solid foundation on which he rests, and which he needs in order to make his work secure.

## II

### THE VITALITY OF POLISH INTELLECTUAL PROPENSITIES

TAKING into account the extraordinary conditions dealt with above, one may well ask if it is to be expected that any room can be found in Poland for the development of intellectual life generally. In this Poland, where intellect is in itself an object of suspicion—as is acknowledged by a French writer—where societies whose aims are as far as possible removed from the realm of politics have yet the utmost difficulty in obtaining permission to exist, or are dissolved, as was, some years ago, the Society of medical men at Wärsaw; where the best energies of the nation are squandered in an unequal struggle with restraint and force; where the most distinguished intellects often perish on the scaffold, in damp prisons, or in limitless Siberia; where affirmation of national individuality is the object of brutal persecution; where everything has to develop without any encouragement from the State; where, in short, all must depend on the initiative of individuals and on personal sacrifices; where the very foundations of national existence are in danger—under conditions such as these it



would be, surely, a great thing to show even that the creative genius of the Polish nation is not atrophied, and that Poland has succeeded in preserving her spiritual integrity, her native language, her artistic and literary taste, in short, her "spiritual faculties," in potential form—or, if you will, the internal conditions conducive to intellectual literary and artistic activity. If it can be shown that this is the case, the Poles will already have given to the civilized world proof of the extraordinary vitality of their national spirit.

Now, this proof the Poles have given in the past, and are constantly giving, arousing in their enemies an irreconcilable fury. History shows clearly that every time exterior conditions have been favourable to the expression of these "potential faculties" they have never failed to manifest themselves. It has been so in Poland under all the three régimes, Prussian, Russian, and Austrian.

*Intellectual Life in German Poland about 1845 and after 1870.*—After the year 1840, Posen, as Professor Struve has said, put herself at the head of the Polish intellectual movement, thanks to the greater liberty she enjoyed in comparison with the other two parts of divided Poland. The result was that many Polish scholars from Russian Poland established themselves there, either temporarily or permanently.

About this period (1843-5) Posen became in some measure the intellectual capital of the whole of Poland. There were to be found there Kamienski, Jarochowski, Kosinski, Mielzynski, Bentowski, Libelt, Moraczewski, Cieszkowski, Trentowski, Kremer, Dembowski, and many others.

Later on the Prussian policy with regard to Poland underwent a change, and was directed towards a merciless and brutal persecution of the Polish element, so that in 1905 the same Professor Struve stated, at the International Philosophical Congress, held at Geneva, that the conditions imposed on Polish scientific societies and institutions in Posen were so severe that it was not at all astonishing if there was then talk of a real "emigration" of Polish scholars from Posen to Cracow and Lemberg.

A similar statement might be made of that part of Poland which had fallen under the dominion of Russia.

*Reformed Vilno University, 1781-1831.*—At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Polish provinces under Russian rule had two chief centres of intellectual culture, Warsaw and Vilno.<sup>1</sup> So far as the second of these is concerned, the intellectual movement there gravitated round the Vilno University, founded in 1579 by Stefan Batory, King of Poland. Although in its far distant past Vilno

<sup>1</sup> To which might also be added Pulawy.

University could pride itself upon names like Skarga, Warszewicki or Sarbiewski, whose muse Grotius justly compared with that of Horace, it must be admitted that its rapid progress dates chiefly from the reforms of 1781 and 1803.

Alexander I, Emperor of Russia, proclaimed in a statute dated April, 1803:—

We secure for ever the future of the ancient University of Vilno, founded in 1578 and reorganized in 1781 according to the scientific standards of the most advanced countries of Europe.

Twenty-nine years after, i.e. in 1831, this reformed shrine of Polish intellectual life, raised by men with brilliant intellectual powers and exceptional capacity for organization, like Czartoryski, Czacki, Sniadecki, and others, was suppressed. Short as was the existence of the new Vilno University, yet its achievements were magnificent. It is acknowledged that in the last decades of its existence the torch of this University burned with a flame so living and resplendent that it lit up, not only Lithuania but also the whole Kingdom of Poland. In the history of the intellectual life of Poland it will be the eternal glory of this University that from its midst came men like Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Kraszewski, Chodzko, Korsak, Odyniec, and others.

*Warsaw "Szkoła Główna" (1862-9).*—The history of the seven years of existence (1862-9) of the Warsaw "Szkoła Główna" (Chief School) affords

another striking piece of evidence of the reality of our contention that the inward propensities towards the intellectual life, as well as literary and artistic interest, have never died in the Polish soul. They have only been held back by unfavourable outward conditions, the influence of which was not the same, it must be pointed out, with regard to the intellectual life of Poland as with regard to its literary and artistic life.

The year 1831 was the beginning in Poland of a period of arrested development in every branch of her national life. The intellectual element in the country was in part banished and in part paralysed by Draconian measures. As a result there was a great danger of mental apathy in the community. It was absolutely necessary to escape from this condition of things, which was threatening the country with a retrograde movement. It was necessary to find some means for reawakening the natural aptitude for the cult of the sciences, an aptitude which was almost asleep, and, so to speak, frozen.

This rôle was exactly filled by the creation in 1862 of the "Szkola Główna"—that is to say, by the revival of the Polish University of Warsaw, which was again closed in its turn in 1869, not identically the same, it is true, but still a revival.

The task undertaken by the "Szkola Główna" consisted, as M. Dickstein, a distinguished Polish mathematician, has explained,<sup>1</sup> of creating the largest

<sup>1</sup> "Księga pamiątkowa b. wychowanców b. Szkoły Głównej" (1905).

possible number of Chairs and filling them with the best scientific forces ; establishing contact with the research work of the West ; creating a favourable atmosphere for the scientists and students of the future.

It was necessary, therefore, to fill up the gaps in the general education of the people caused by long years of stagnation ; to render higher education more accessible to the young ; to show them the important problems that await them in future ; to prepare useful citizens for the country, capable of occupying responsible posts, demanding University training. In spite of adverse circumstances the "Szkola Główna" discharged its duties for seven years.

After a few years important scientific works written by former students of the "Szkola Główna" began to appear in the Memoirs of the Association of Exact Science in Paris, and in the Transactions of the Academy of Sciences in Cracow. From amidst these pupils there had grown a generation which for the last forty years has been uninterruptedly working on the scientific and social fields in Poland. But only a handful of them were in a position to devote themselves to purely scientific work or to fill University Chairs.

It is known that the "Szkola Główna" produced a large number of men of great, if not exceptional, value (Sienkiewicz, Prus, Swietochowski, Chmielowski, Dygasinski, Rembowski, Badouin de Courtenay, Dunin, Kraushar, Gloger, etc.); that amongst

them appeared magnificent talents and critical minds ; that they created one of the most beautiful periods of our literature ; that they brought about a powerful intellectual movement whose waves and currents flow through our life even to-day. All this could not have been a matter of accident, but was much more owing to the merit of the School.

The School freed new forces of the nation, which would otherwise have withered away and perished ; it succeeded in utilizing the great passion for learning in the young, and the inclination to education in the older ; it created a scientific atmosphere for the Polish intellectual classes ; it gave free play to Polish thought ; it welded heterogeneous elements of the nation in the fire of comradeship ; it prepared the soil for the new seed of democracy ; and it restored, or at least helped to restore, the spiritual balance of the people, which was disturbed by a one-sided artistic development, by transferring the excess of energy from the heart to the brain.

A most astonishing fact is that this was accomplished during barely seven years, not only through the scientific knowledge of the teachers of the School, but also, as has been pointed out by M. A. Swietochowski, through its national character : the School was Polish throughout.

Students listening to lectures delivered in their native tongue [says M. Swietochowski] are not hampered by various psychic factors obstructing the free association of thoughts and cooling rather than stimulating their interest in work.

The collective soul of every nation is a distinct prism in

itself, in which the rays of knowledge break in a specific manner, different from other prisms. It can also be compared to an individual organism which can feed itself successfully only according to its own nature. The national School offers its people suitable food in the best form for assimilation and for maintenance of health and vigour.

All this was done by the "Szkola Główna." To say this is not a patriotic sophism, but a conclusion based on experience, because whenever we had the chance of having a Polish University its strong influence was immediately and distinctly reflected in the development of the nation's culture. We know the salutary influence of the Universities of Warsaw and Vilno, we know what powerful light they cast on the country, and what deep darkness fell upon her the moment these institutions were closed.<sup>1</sup>

In place of this wholesome institution, which provided for the needs of the intellectual development of the country, there was established in 1869 its exact opposite—a University whose aim was, in the words of Professor Askenazy, "to serve as an auxiliary instrument, among many others, with a view to the policy of unification, in conformity with the idea of the State as a means of levelling everything and everybody, as well as to act as a purely bureaucratic machine created for the purpose of distributing University diplomas."<sup>2</sup> The Polish language was banished from this new University, together with Polish professors and scholars. From the standpoint of scientific movement, it played no part whatever, either in Poland or in Russia, and its professorial staff was destitute of scientific authorities.

<sup>1</sup> "Księga Szkoły Głównej," p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> S. Askenazy, *Uniw. Warszawski*, 1905.

Further, some of its professors set themselves to create in the minds of their pupils a real feeling of distaste for the institutions and ideas of Western Europe. France, for instance, was represented to them as a decadent country, in process of falling to pieces. It is not astonishing, therefore, that the result of all this has been disastrous as regards Poland, and entirely negative as regards Russia. The numbers of the attendance at this University, have fallen 210 per cent. as compared with those of the university, it replaced.

Austrian Poland, which occupies a very inferior economic and cultural position, and where half the population is made up of Ruthenians, much less suited to a University education, has nevertheless an attendance of students several times greater than is found in the Kingdom of Poland. In 1905, in Galicia there were 5,000 students out of 7,500,000 inhabitants, while in Russian Poland, out of 11,000,000 inhabitants only 1,500 were students. The fact that Russian and Prussian Poland have no Polish University, has sent a large number of students to the Universities of France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, etc.

It will be superfluous to try to show that the constitutional and liberal régime enjoyed by the Poles in Galicia has had a highly favourable effect on the development of Polish intellectual life in that part of Poland.



*Revival of the Polish University at Warsaw in 1915.*—Lastly, as a concluding proof that the Poles have been able to preserve potentially their natural capabilities, and that the whole policy of Russification or Germanization has succeeded only in retarding its development, there may be adduced the fact of the creation of the University of Warsaw after the fall of that city.

The *Warsaw Courier* (November 1915) describes at some length the extraordinary difficulties which had to be overcome by the Education Department of the Citizens' Committee of Warsaw, in order to create in that city a Polish University and a Polish Technical High School. Having obtained the permission of the authorities, the said department achieved its aim in the course of a few weeks, in spite of interrupted communication with the provinces, where there is to be found a not inconsiderable number of Polish scientists and professors, in spite of the devastation of the country, threatened by poverty and hunger, and in spite of the fact that the original Polish University of Warsaw had been closed for fifty years.

The above-mentioned paper pays a high tribute to this remarkable and unusual manifestation of the energy and organizing talent of the Poles, and adds: "History will some day do justice to this city, which, being able to offer neither money nor facilities to Polish science, has yet always possessed a certain number of men devoted to science with disinterestedness and endurance, who have fulfilled their duty.

towards civilization and country, without any brighter prospects, and often under most trying financial conditions."

*Production of Books in Poland.*—Perhaps a few statistical data showing the number and the distribution of Polish books published in 1911 will be of interest in considering the reality of Polish literary and scientific propensities.

According to the Swiss periodical *Droit d'Auteur*, the following was the production of books in 1911: France, 11,652; Great Britain, 10,914; Holland, 3,673; Poland, 3,462; Spain, 2,790; Hungary, 2,032.

The following is a classification of Polish books, according to their subject-matter (1910):—

Bibliography, 63	Geography and Travels, 39
Philosophy and Psychology, 66	Novels, 267
Mathematics and Natural Sciences, 141	Poetry, 122
Anthropology, 13	Art, 51
History, 135	Music, 114
Medicine, 100	Drama, 82
Law, Economics, and Sociology, 98	Pedagogy, 70
Ethnology and Ethnography, 9	Textbooks for Schools, 117
History of Literature, 164	Books for Children, 173
Comparative Study of Languages, 15	Theology, 370
Technology, 42	Popular Literature, 262
Trade and Commerce, 22	Sensational Literature, 57
Agriculture, 84	Books of Songs, etc., 81
	Miscellaneous, 322
	Almanacks, 147
	Reports, etc., 200

The above examples prove that it is true to say that the Poles have been able to preserve all those civilizing propensities which from mediæval days down to the present time have distinguished Polish national life. And this in spite of the unequal struggle, in spite of the violence of the means employed by the partitioning Powers—a violence which oftentimes nothing but the limitations of the human imagination could check. The Powers in question have succeeded merely in hindering the normal development of these propensities, in creating for them conditions entirely out of harmony with the past history of the intellectual life of Poland.

*Intellectual Life in Poland in the Past.*—Before the loss of their political independence, the Poles possessed five Universities, and were considering the foundation of two more—in Posen and in Wolhynia. At the beginning of this War they possessed only two. The Polish University of Cracow, founded in 1364—that is to say, at an earlier date than the foundation of the first German University—quickly became the rendezvous of young students who came in streams from all the countries of Europe, even from those which already possessed their own Universities, to attend the lectures of celebrated professors such as the astronomer Wojciech (better known as Adalbert), the teacher of the immortal Copernicus. Thus

in the period 1433-1509 nearly half the students of the Cracow University were foreigners. But now, in our own time, the young students of Russian and Prussian Poland, as well as numbers of scholars, are obliged to migrate to foreign countries, such as France, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, and others, to seek the light they cannot find in their own land or are forbidden to kindle there.

Frankly, such a state of things is not deserved by the Poland which in the past has given to the civilized world sufficient proofs of its capacity to contribute to the development of intellectual life and civilization in general.

The Cracow University, which educated Copernicus, had as early as 1416, says the "Encyclopædia Britannica," "so far acquired a European reputation as to venture upon forwarding an expression of its views in connection with the deliberations of the Council of Constance, and towards the close of the fifteenth century the Cracow University was in high repute as a school of both astronomical and humanistic studies." <sup>1</sup>

Leonard Cox, an Englishman and a former student of Cracow University, in his *De Laudibus Academicæ Cracoviensis*, published in 1518, gave expression to his intense admiration of the Polish scholastic dialectic, and it was Erasmus of Rotterdam himself who, in 1529, dedicated his edition of the works of Seneca to the Bishop of Cracow, as to a centre of learning of European reputation.

<sup>1</sup> "Encyc. Brit.," 1911, vol. xxvii. p. 757.

Although in the subsequent period of Polish thought there was a decline, the Poles have always preserved their interest in the intellectual life, public instruction, methods of teaching, etc. Poland, therefore, as was stated a few months ago by M. Siedlecki in the Warsaw weekly paper, *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, came up to the requirements and the high standard of University life as far back as the fifteenth century, and since that time she has not once deviated from her spiritual course. There has been no period in her historic past when the loss of a centre of higher education has not been painfully felt by the nation. What the Poles are apt to call the epoch of decline in Poland, namely the seventeenth century, witnessed not only the formation of higher educational institutions in Poland proper, but also in Lithuania and the distant provinces of the realm. The banner of higher education was hoisted over the northern town of Polock, bringing with it the torch of Western European intellectual light. In the same century we find another example of Polish educational initiative in the formation of the Academy of Kieff, so that at a time which, with scrupulous self-criticism, the Poles term the period of decay, Polish science had still so much elasticity, so much excess of energy, that it was able to undertake intellectual missions outside the ethnographic boundaries of the Polish Commonwealth.

### III

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF POLISH INTELLECTUAL LIFE

IF fettered Poland has been able to preserve and even to develop what we have called her "potential faculties," this has been made possible only by the enormous sacrifices she has always been ready to make for the retention at any cost of her individuality. Of this an eloquent example is to be found in the institutions connected with the intellectual life of Poland. These are the incarnation of the spirit at once of sacrifice, of self-defence, and of organization.

*Polish Scientific Institutions and Societies.*—After Poland lost her independence, the necessity of maintaining and developing science and arts called into being a number of new societies as far as the partitioning Powers would permit. One of the most important of these is the Ossolinski National Institute and Public Library, in Lemberg. It was founded by Count Joseph Maximilian Ossolinski in 1817. In 1823 the Lubomirski Museum was added to it. This Institute has gradually become one of the leading scientific institutions in Poland,

although before the year 1860 its development was greatly hindered by the repressive measures of the Austrian Government. Even the adjective "national" in the name of the Institute was regarded as an offence by the Government, which persistently tried to change it to "scientific." In spite of these difficulties "Ossolineum," as it is commonly called, has flourished, and possesses over £32,000 of capital, as well as a large building in Lemberg and its own printing works, library, and museum.

In Posen, the Society for Promoting Science, founded by Karol Marcinkowski in 1841, has rendered great services to the cause of Polish intellectual life. This prosperous Society has endowment funds amounting to £52,000.

There are two institutions in Poland whose special object is helping the cause of research. The first is the Mianowski Loan Fund, established in Warsaw in 1881 by Dr. Joseph Mianowski, and the second is the Society for Promotion of Polish Science, founded in Lemberg in 1901.

Among the most visible signs of the activity of the Mianowski Fund are the publications which it has helped to issue. Its catalogue contains over 620 titles of works in all departments of knowledge. Besides separate books this institution helps to publish series of important works.

The Lemberg Society for Promoting Polish Science was founded twenty years later than the Mianowski Loan Fund, and cannot therefore boast

of an equally splendid record ; nevertheless, considering its comparatively slender resources, it has given proofs of great vitality and efficiency. During the second year of its existence its membership increased by 1,015. The aim of the Society, is "to help Polish scientists or institutions which devote themselves to the cause of research in any branch of knowledge" ; this aim has been achieved chiefly by helping such persons or institutions to publish the results of their inquiries. So far 49 books have been published, on the following subjects : Polish Law, History, History of Literature, Art, Science, and Psychology. Besides these works the Society issues the following publications : "The Archivum of Knowledge"—divided into two sections : the historical-philosophical (6 volumes) and the mathematical-scientific—and "Studies in the History of Polish Law." In order to enable foreign scholars to become acquainted with the results of the Society's researches it issues a "Bulletin" in French (12 volumes up till now).

These few societies do not exhaust all the activities of the Polish community in support of art and science. Many smaller associations and institutions exist, and some of them have rendered valuable services to the cause of Polish intellectual life. Such are, for instance :—

Circle of the Polish Mathematicians at Warsaw (Kolo matematyczne w Warszawie).

Warsaw Psychological Association (Tow. psychologiczne w Warszawie).



Lemberg Pedagogical Society (Tow. pedagogiczne we Lwowie).  
Polish Philosophical Association at Lemberg (Polskie tow. filozoficzne we Lwowie).  
Cracow Philosophical Society (Tow. filozoficzne w Krakowie).  
Lemberg Law Association (Tow. prawnicze lwowskie).  
Warsaw Law Association (Tow. prawnicze warszawskie).  
Cracow Law and Economic Association (Tow. prawnicze i ekonomiczne w Krakowie).  
Lemberg Historical Society (Tow. historyczne we Lwowie).  
Cracow Historical Society (Tow. historyczne w Krakowie).  
Warsaw Historical Society (Tow. miłośników historii w Warszawie).  
Cracow Numismatic Society (Tow. numizmatyczne w Krakowie).  
Lemberg Folk-lore Society (Tow. ludoznawcze we Lwowie).  
Lemberg Mickiewicz Literary Society (Tow. literackie im. Mickiewicza we Lwowie), etc.

The interest taken in all scientific societies by the Polish community is very noteworthy. The best proofs of this are the great number of members and the rapid spread and development of such societies; the latter fact also proves how very much desired they were. A few years were sufficient for the Warsaw Scientific Society, to become a very influential institution.

Unfortunately, the Polish scientific societies and institutions depend for their monetary resources solely on voluntary subscriptions. Thus, for instance, a few years ago a generous patroness presented the Public Library, in Warsaw with a fine building, the cost of the erection of which represented over £40,000. The donations received by the Cracow Academy, the Warsaw Scientific Society, and the

Vilno Society, afford another convincing proof of the great generosity of the public in Poland. Thus, as soon as the Vilno Society of Friends of Learning received a few years ago a legal status, gifts began to pour in from all over Lithuania; collections of books, archives, and many other gifts were sent, regardless of the fact that many times previously, such collections have after a time been taken away, to Russia by the Government.

*Central Institutions of Intellectual Life in Poland.*

—All the above institutions have been created as being essential to the promotion of the development of the intellectual life of the country. There are other institutions which occupy a more central position and which exercise a more controlling or directing influence.

At the head of Polish scientific institutions is the Cracow Academy, originally, called the Cracow Scientific Society. It was inaugurated in February, 1816 by the Rector of Cracow University, Valentine Litwinski. The foundation of this institution is directly connected with Cracow University, which represents the embodiment of centuries of Polish intellectual tradition. According to the regulation of 1816, the rectors of Cracow University, had to perform at the same time the functions of the President of the Cracow Scientific Society. After the closing, by order of the Russian Government, of the Society of the Friends of Learning in Warsaw, the

Cracow Scientific Society, became the leading institution in the intellectual life of the whole of Poland. In 1873 it received new regulations and the title of "Academy." During the forty years from that date, acting under somewhat better political conditions, the Academy has done excellent work in every domain of knowledge. Its publications of important documents relating to Polish History, Literature and Law, Polish Bibliography, the History of Art in Poland, Archæology, and Ethnography, are truly monumental works in no way inferior to the corresponding publications of other nations.

At present the Academy has commenced the publication of the "Polish Encyclopædia"; the contributors to this number several hundred and the volumes several score. There is a branch of the Academy in Paris, and for several years now a party of Polish scholars sent by the Academy to Rome has been conducting researches relating to the history of Poland. Similar parties have latterly visited Sweden and Hungary, for the same purpose. An examination of the list of publications shows the wide scope of the Academy's activities.

As Lemberg did not wish to compete with the Cracow Academy, no large and comprehensive Society of a similar nature has been formed in Eastern Galicia, but in respect of the number of societies devoted to the furthering of special subjects this town is first in all Poland. In Warsaw, Rosen, and Vilno the need for an institution which would

be representative of all that was best in the intellectual life of each part of the country, was also felt. There was a twofold reason for this: first, the difference in the conditions prevailing in the three parts of Poland—Russian, Prussian, and Austrian; and secondly, the fact that even the many and varied activities of the Academy, were not sufficient to meet the growing intellectual needs of the country. At the present time the centres of intellectual activity in Poland may be divided into five, namely: Cracow, which serves as such for the whole of Poland; Lemberg, for Galicia; Warsaw, for the Kingdom of Poland; Vilno, for Lithuania; and Posen, for the Duchy of Posen. Thorn may be added as a sixth centre, for it can boast of a smaller but very energetic Society.

After the suppression in 1833, by Russian Imperial order, of the Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie (Warsaw Scientific Society) there was no central institution in Warsaw co-ordinating the scientific life of this part of Poland. It was only in 1907 that the revival of the above institution was allowed. The work of the Society is carried out in sections, which publish their *Transactions*. There are three sections: (1) Philology and Literature; (2) Anthropology, Social Sciences, History, and Philosophy; (3) Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The Society possesses a certain number of laboratories for research in the departments of Physiology, Anthropology, Neuro-biology, Meteorology, Radiology, Zoology, etc.

In German Poland the Polish Scientific Movement is promoted as far as possible by the Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Poznaniu (Society of Friends of Learning in Posen), founded in 1857. It issues an *Annual* (since its foundation) and *Medical News* (since 1889), as well as separate publications. It is also active in promoting scientific lectures, the care of ancient monuments, and the erection of statues to the distinguished dead.

The Society consists of five sections: (1) History and Literature (existing since 1857); (2) Natural Sciences (since 1857); (3) Medicine (since 1865); (4) Law and Economics (since 1908); and (5) Technology (since 1912).

The Society possesses a library consisting of 140,000 volumes, 800 manuscripts, as well as numerous collections, viz.: (1) Picture Gallery, (about 800 pictures); (2) Prehistoric Archæological Collection; (3) Ethnographic Collection; (4) Numismatic Collection; (5) Natural History Collection; (6) Collection of Objects of National and Historical Interest.

As to Lithuania, it was only in 1906 that permission was granted to found Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Wilnie (The Society of Friends of Learning in Vilno). This Society issues an annual publication as well as separate publications. The meetings take place once a month. The Society organizes lectures and devotes its energies to the preservation of national monuments and memorials. In 1911 its members numbered 400: 353 ordinary, and 47

honorary, patrons, and life-members. The Society possesses a library, as well as rich archives.

During 1913 the Society was amalgamated with Muzeum Nauki i Sztuki (The Vilno Art and Science Museum) and is therefore now in possession of the valuable collections of the Museum.

We must again emphasize the fact that, in order to estimate at its true worth the work done by Polish learned societies, it is necessary to realize the difficulties they have had to contend with. In Galicia, where the Government did not hinder their formation, they developed rapidly, and accomplished a great deal of valuable work. In the Kingdom of Poland it was not until the year 1905, when the status of such societies was legalized, that the conditions became somewhat easier; since then a great number of societies have arisen and flourished. It must be borne in mind that the continuity of their work had been completely broken, and that for over half a century there had been no room in Russia for Polish intellectual activity. This break lasted from 1831 till 1907; it was not till 1907 that the formation of the Warsaw Scientific Society was permitted. Vilno suffered the same fate; its ancient University was closed and all societies abolished in 1831. The only Society which escaped was the Medical Society, but its privileges were gradually curtailed, and in 1874 it was forbidden to use the Polish language; Russian was the language to be used at meetings and for documents, treatises, etc., but any of the members who did not know it were

allowed to speak French, German, or English; finally, the Society was completely taken over by the Russian Administration. The list of Polish societies which were abolished by the Government and those which existed without being authorized to exist would be very long. Although conditions were better before the war broke out, it may be said that every society which is flourishing and attracts large numbers of the intellectual classes is threatened with extinction by the Government.

It is almost superfluous to speak of the difficulties encountered in Prussian Poland.

The before-mentioned fact showing how the Leipsic University has misused certain funds which were given by a Polish magnate, Prince Jablonski, in 1774, is a very typical instance among many others.

#### IV.

### EPILOGUE

THE Poles are standing out for the acquisition of such conditions as will allow them to develop their living personality and to bring their tribute to the common treasure of mankind.

Apparently, the fulfilment of these conditions does not require the right to an independent political self-determination, and if so, i.e. if the Poles do not claim what is sometimes called a radical solution of the Polish question, the present war may, easily, it may be said, realize their aspirations. This ought to be the view especially of that part of Polish public opinion which comprises its intellectual classes, the mental attitude of which in all countries is generally characterized by a diminished enthusiasm for such things as the idea of a king, that of a national army, or that of outward strength or expansion.

This is perhaps true in the case of the countries which have never ceased to enjoy political independence, but it is certainly false in the case of a country which, like Poland, has lost this independence. The intellectual classes in Poland take



their stand firmly, under the banner of political independence. For them, as for other sections of Polish society, freedom constitutes the indispensable condition of the development of Poland's individuality, which ought not to be confounded with "originality." The history of the last hundred years has shown to the Poles quite conclusively that there cannot be real and lasting freedom for Poland without political independence, without a Polish State and a Polish Army. The spirit of imperialism and expansion, the jealousy between nations, etc., will remain for a long time the main obstacle towards a mutual understanding between nations, especially in the case of inequality in their respective strengths. This is a fact which cannot be abolished by mere reasoning or speculation, like those, for instance, which are based on the distinction between "good-hearted" and "brutal" nations. The Poles have little to expect, either, from the future development of what is called "liberal" tendencies in politics. History shows that in the development of liberal and progressive political parties there occur very curious transformations as soon as they attain to power or even as soon as they realize that they are beginning to exercise a real influence on governmental authority.

What intellectual Poland wants is an intense, complete, peaceful, and uninterrupted national life. It is only in the restored Polish State that such a life can exist. Such an intense and peaceful life will certainly be favourable to the development

of those fundamental mental "faculties" which have been responsible for the development of Polish thought in the past, and which the Poles have been able to preserve in spite of unfavourable outward conditions.

Among these "faculties" a prominent place has been taken by creative imagination.

It is a well-known fact that different nations contribute not merely, in different degrees but also in different ways towards the development of various high expressions of thought, feelings and will.<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is to be expected that psychologists will be able to demonstrate in the future that the Polish national genius is distinguished for the

<sup>1</sup> Herr Hans Delbrück, Professor in the University of Berlin and Deputy to the Reichstag, expressed this opinion some years ago: "The splendour and the intellectual wealth of our epoch, our progress in the sciences, in philosophy, in art, and in technical matters—in a word, the whole of civilization is based on the plurality of the great nations. Each has its own qualities, its own nature, its own development, and the labour and productions of each have an influence upon the others. The great minds of Germany could never have been what they were without Voltaire, Rousseau, Shakespeare, and neither the French nor the English could be what they are without Luther and the Reformation." Herbert Spencer and other sociologists affirm that the world passes from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, everything acquires complexity and is subdivided. The division of labour carried to infinity conduces to the interdependence of countries and of individuals. This interdependence cannot be realized, as Fouillée emphasized, either by a narrow nationalism or by a half-understood internationalism which fails to recognize both the true nature and the true needs of national organisms.

power of its creative imagination and its peculiar mental freedom. From Copernicus down to M. Henryk Sienkiewicz this quality may be noticed. Professor Höffding, a well-known Danish philosopher and psychologist, writes on this point as follows :—

What is marvellous in scientific genius is the mental freedom with which it is able to abstract from experience and to picture the different possibilities with all their consequences, in order to find by this means a new reality, not accessible to direct experience. Kepler<sup>1</sup> cited this mental freedom as a significant feature in the genius of Copernicus.\*

It is also this rare freedom and power of imagination which strikes one most in reading certain of M. Henryk Sienkiewicz's works.

Simon Newcomb said about Copernicus :—

There is no figure in astronomical history which may more appropriately claim the admiration of mankind through all time than that of Copernicus. Scarcely any great work was ever so exclusively the work of one man as was the heliocentric system, the work of the retiring sage of Frauenburg.<sup>3</sup>

Although the position of M. Sienkiewicz in the history of literature is different from that occupied by Copernicus in the history of astronomy, the reading of his works leaves a similar impression :

<sup>1</sup> Reuschle, "Kepler und die Astronomie," Frankfurt, 1871, p. 119 : "Copernicus vir maximo ingenio et, quod in hoc exercitio magni momenti est, animo libero."

<sup>2</sup> Höffding, "Outlines of Psychology," p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> "The Problems of Astronomy," pp. 83, 84.

it is at times difficult to decide what to admire more, M. Sienkiewicz's works or the mind which produced them.

That creative imagination is needed both in the scientific and in the literary or artistic activities of man may be easily gathered from the following statement made by Professor Karl Pearson in his well-known "Grammar of Science" (p. 30):—

There is an element in our being which is not satisfied by the formal processes of reasoning; it is the imaginative or æsthetic side, the side to which the poets and philosophers appeal, and one which science cannot, to be scientific, disregard. We have seen that the imagination must not replace the reason in the deduction of relation and law from classified facts. But, none the less, disciplined imagination has been at the bottom of all great scientific discoveries. All great scientists have, in a certain sense, been great artists; the man with no imagination may collect facts, but he cannot make great discoveries. If I were compelled to name the Englishmen who during our generation have had the widest imaginations and exercised them most beneficially, I think I should put the novelists and poets on one side and say Michael Faraday and Charles Darwin.

The above quotation tends to prove that it is a fallacy to think that pure intellect is, so to say, a self-supporting and self-determining factor in scientific production. But it is equally a fallacy, to imagine that the intellect is genetically independent of its national milieu, "because the 'fatherland' is shown by history, to be an institution necessary to the life of man, and because man is by nature a social being, and the universal com-

munity of all men has been up to now—and will be for long years yet—a pure creation of the imagination.”<sup>1</sup>

So intellectual Poland no less than literary and artistic Poland is deeply interested in this intense and peaceful civilizing work, which she needs and of which the possession of her own externally independent political form is a condition. Polish thinkers as well as Polish politicians are right when they require, not a disabled and humiliated “autonomous” Poland, fruit of somebody’s “generosity,” or “benevolence,” but a Poland armed for the future, and conscious of her own strength and destiny, conscious of the civilizing part which she may play in a regenerated Europe, a Poland embodied with a spirit of national dignity and honour. Romanticism!

It is a curious thing that only the Great Powers are allowed to be romantic. The others, and especially the Poles, must refrain from it under pain of making themselves appear ridiculous.

On May 15, 1916, the papers published a statement made by Sir Edward Grey to the London representative of the *Chicago Daily News*, which closed with the following sentence, referring to the German authorities: “They do not understand that free men and free nations will rather die than submit to that ambition, and that there can be no end to war till it is defeated and renounced.”

*The Times* of June 3, 1916, in a leading article

<sup>1</sup> Le Fur, *Revue droit int. pub.*, vol. v. p. 463.

on the Jutland Naval Battle declared that this battle will steel the British people's "unalterable resolution to win this war or perish."

These declarations were received with general approbation and enthusiasm by the people.

Similar expressions of romanticism might be found in hundreds, in the countries of the Allies as well as in those of the Central Powers. Everywhere they meet with approval.

Why, then, is it only Polish romanticism that offends the ears of Europe?

Why must the Poles have preached to them the necessity of slavery, when the whole world besides demands the liberty?

That is a deviation from the moral sense which it is exceedingly difficult to understand.

But as has been stated above, for intellectual Poland the question of the political independence of the country, is not simply one of romanticism. It can confront a scientific and "positive" discussion.

There is a general tendency to give the Poles lessons in practical wisdom. They are constantly invited to compromise and conciliation. As to the compromise, a Polish political writer, M. Jan Dombrowski, said recently in a Polish daily, *Dziennik Petrogradzki*: "Compromise is known only by Governments and parties—the peoples ignore it."

M. Dombrowski is quite right. There are certain eternal values, certain fundamental facts on which the development of mankind is based, which cannot

be made the object of compromise or conciliation. They are, and they will ever remain, high above international congresses and diplomacy. The Poles will never understand or admit that their country, and they themselves may be made the property of another nation, that there may be a foreign mortgage on their country.

It may be interesting to know the attitude the Great Powers themselves are taking towards the suggestions of compromise coming from outside on matters which they consider of vital importance to their countries.

Here is a quotation which speaks for itself:—

In the meantime the British people and their Allies would look upon suggestions of compromise, however friendly, and from whatever quarter they came, very much as President Lincoln and Mr. Seward looked upon them in the Civil War. The American records of that period afford the classic instance of how a great democracy fighting for its life, and for what it prizes more than life, meets even the hint of interference from outside. Neutrals cannot be too tender of the susceptibilities of belligerents when they undertake to criticize their political action.<sup>1</sup>

As to the necessity of being practical—i.e. of not abandoning such aims as are unrealizable under given conditions—the Poles, even if their realism were not subordinated to some higher ideals which make life worth living, ought not to be unnecessarily moderate in their judgment of what is realizable and what is not. History shows that

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, May 27, 1916, "The Hollowness of Peace Talk."

man's capacity to forecast the future is still very limited and there is no power so strong as the will. What is sometimes called by the high-sounding name "political realism" is often nothing more than lack of foresight, which may be fatally disastrous to those who carry it too far.

Of the fact that neither individuals nor countries can foresee the future this war has given ample evidence. It has given many evidences to the Poles also.

"When a man feels himself bereft of all protection, when he can reckon no longer on either friendship, or justice, or pity, there is nevertheless one feeling that remains—that is hope. Hope alone is adequate to defend him against despair. Hope alone possesses the power of administering the last unction to his dying lips. It is hope, too, this good, sympathetic, and faithful source of consolation, which irradiates the image—far off, and yet so near—of our dear University—a hope which by its very presence brings comfort to our soul."

These were the words with which M. Alexander Swietochowski concluded his oration in 1903, when he met the former students of the Polish University of Warsaw ("Szkola Główna"), which had been closed in 1867.

What do such words as these prove if not that in 1903 the chances of the restoration of the Polish University of Warsaw were so remote that it was necessary for Swietochowski to impress on his colleagues their bounden duty to keep on hoping?



For, as Casanova once emphasized, despair is a form of suicide, and then, as Crébillon added, there is nothing left but shame.

Truly, the outlook was most unpromising!

What was an impossibility even so recently as 1903 has become to-day a solid reality: the Polish University at Warsaw was resuscitated in November of last year.

Such an example, precarious as it may appear, so long as the Poles have no effective power to administer their own affairs, so long as a Polish State is not a living reality, must strengthen the Poles in the belief that they must never give up the idea of national independence. There is every reason to think that the Poles will never give up this ideal, and that it may one day be realized, because, as Lord Weardale said: "The Polish race has many gifts, but perhaps its enduring faith is its most remarkable characteristic."

The faithfulness of the Poles to the idea of independence will prevent them from one day deserving to have said of them what Montesquieu said about Rome:—

When Sylla wished to give back Rome her freedom she could not take it—nothing but the shadow of her virtue remained; . . . she fell deeper and deeper into slavery\* ;

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\* "Poland's Struggle for Independence," by Kucharski. With an Introduction by Lord Weardale.

\* "Esprit des Lois," iii. 3: "Quand Sylla voulut rendre à Rome sa liberté elle ne put plus la recevoir, elle n'avait plus qu'un faible reste de vertu; . . . elle fut toujours plus esclave."

or what Tetmajer, a Polish poet, said about illustrious Greece:—

The soldier alone is the defender of the honour of an enslaved nation. When Ancient Greece was occupied by the Romans she continued to give to the world thinkers, philosophers, and artists, but this in no way prevented the Romans from despising her. In contempt perished the nation which yet was—as the Romans themselves recognized—in the highest rank of intelligence in the world of her time, which was able to impose her own tongue upon her conquerors as an auxiliary language and a model to the learned circles and the intellectual classes of the Roman people.

The Poles really feel that if they give up the ideal of independence they will very rapidly cease to be a united although partitioned nation, that they will lose their individuality and therefore the possibility of active participation in the higher forms of expression of the spiritual as opposed to the merely material life, that they will abase themselves morally, and will deserve the contempt of all the honest and dishonest world. And in so thinking the Poles are undoubtedly right, because, psychologically speaking, the idea of national dignity plays the same part in the life of a nation as the idea of self-respect in the moral consciousness of the individual, although it is less evident.

If the object is to preserve and develop the personality as a whole, you cannot sacrifice these sentiments with impunity, without harming the individual or the social organism in which they occupy a central position.

Modern social psychology is ready, we think,

to acknowledge this truth, and it is to be expected that the Western democracies will not show themselves incapable of understanding what vital and profound meaning there is in faithfulness to the ideal of national independence in the case of an enslaved, but not degraded, nation, in the case of a nationality which desires to keep itself distinct and united in the midst of other peoples.

Was it not a great English poet and philosopher, Pope, who said: "Let fortune do her worst whatever she makes us lose, as long as she never makes us lose our honesty, and our independence"? And was it not a French humanist, Guérout, who proclaimed: "*Toutes les fois que la France est infidèle à une noble cause, elle s'appauvrit et se dégrade*"?

The truth contained in these words is deeply rooted in the convictions of Polish patriots. And when the German Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, included the following sentence in his speech in the Reichstag on the 19th of August last, after the fall of Warsaw:—

For centuries geographical and political fate have forced the Germans and Poles to fight against each other. The recollection of these old differences does not diminish respect for the passion of patriotism and tenacity with which the Polish people defends its old Western civilization and its love of independence in the severe sufferings from Russism, a love which is maintained also through the misfortune of this war—

he knew perfectly well that from a Polish point of view he was paying the Poles the greatest tribute they could crave for themselves. He knew, too,

that he would strike the most tender chord in the Polish soul.

Whatever comment may be made on the sincerity of the Chancellor's words, it must, at least, be admitted that in this case, as in many other circumstances, Germany has proved to be "well informed" about Polish aims and Polish political aspirations.

In this war the Poles have no other means of asserting their imprescriptable right to the independence they claim, except through the pen and the spoken word, and even that much is often denied them.

If this right is not given to them in the next Peace Congress, from which the optimists hope will ensue a regenerated Europe, there will be only one thing left for them to do: to struggle on until the final victory, for, as Staszyc, a great Polish patriot, said after the partitions: "A great nation may fall, only a vile nation can perish."

## CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE POLISH UNIVERSITIES

- 1364. Cracow (Kraków). University founded by King Casimir the Great, with three Faculties: Arts, Law, and Medicine.
- 1400. Cracow University, improved and endowed by King Ladislaw Jagiello, in accordance with the wishes of Queen Hedwig (Jadwiga). Theological Faculty added with the consent of the Pope.
- 1478. Kulm (Chełmno). University founded and endowed by the city, in accordance with a privilege granted by King Casimir Jagello, and placed under the protection of the Bishop of Chełmno.

About 1550 the Academy ceased to exist owing to the quarrel between Catholics and Protestants, and its activities were transferred to a school under the direction of the University of Cracow.

- 1578. The Jesuits' College (founded in 1569) converted by King Stephan Batory into an University for Lithuania, with two Faculties: Philosophy and Theology. Confirmed by the Pope in 1579 and by the Diet of the Com-

monwealth in 1588. Faculties of Law and Medicine added by King Vladislav IV. in 1641. [The Faculty of Medicine, however, was not opened until 1783.]

1595. Zamosc. University founded by Chancellor Jan Zamojski, with three Faculties: Philology, Law, and Medicine. Confirmed by King Sigismund in 1601. Theological Faculty added in 1648 with the consent of the Pope.
1612. Posen (Poznan). Rights of University conferred by King Sigismund on a College founded by the Jesuits in 1571. Protests raised by the Diet and by the Cracow Academy.

This University existed as a private institution until 1773, when the Order of Jesuits was suppressed.

1661. Lemberg (Lwów). College founded by the Jesuits in 1608 converted into an University by King John Casimir. Protest raised by the Diet and by the Cracow Academy. Charter confirmed by the Pope in 1759. Closed in 1773.

In all these institutions the lectures were held in Latin, Polish being used as a supplementary language only, in the elementary classes. In 1783 the Education Commission abolished the use of Latin and introduced Polish throughout.

The history of the Schools after the Partition is as follows :—

1784. Zamosc. University, closed by the Austrian Government, which transformed it into a secondary school, where the lectures were given in Latin and German.
1784. Lemberg (Lwów). University, reopened by the Emperor Joseph II with four Faculties: Theology, Law, Medicine, and Philosophy. Lectures held in Latin and German, and since 1787 in the "Church-Ruthenian" language.
1803. Cracow (Kraków). Latin introduced in place of Polish in the University.
1803. Vilno (Wilno). The Chief School (Szkola Główna) converted into an Imperial University. All subjects taught in Polish.
1805. Lemberg (Lwów). University, closed, and incorporated with the University of Cracow.
1810. Cracow (Kraków). Polish organization and language reinstated at Cracow University, by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw.
1812. Polotsk. Jesuits' College converted by the Emperor Alexander I into an University, with three Faculties: Philology, Philosophy, and Theology. Lectures given in Polish and Latin.

In 1820 the University, was taken over from the Jesuits by the Order of Pijarists, and existed till 1833.

1816. Warsaw (Warszawa). Royal University founded by the Emperor Alexander I, with following Faculties: Law and Administrative

Sciences, Medicine, Physics and Mathematics, and Fine Arts. Lectures given in Polish. Also a Theological Faculty, confirmed by the Pope in 1818, where subjects were taught in Latin.

1817. Lemberg (Lwów). University re-established by the Emperor Francis I, with lectures in German.

1831. Warsaw (Warszawa). Royal University closed, and its Faculties converted into the following special Schools, where lectures were held in Polish:—

Theological Academy (1835-67).

Gynecological Institute.

School of Fine Arts (1844-63).

Law courses (1840-46).

1832. Vilno (Wilno). University closed, the following Schools formed from its Faculties:—

Academy of Medicine and Surgery, (closed 1842).

Academy of Theology, (transferred to Petrograd in 1842).

1853. Cracow (Kraków). German made the official language of the University.

1857. Warsaw (Warszawa). Opening of the Royal and Imperial Academy of Medicine and Surgery. All subjects taught in Polish. Incorporated with the Chief School in 1862.

1861. Cracow (Kraków). Partial re-establishment of teaching in Polish.

1862. Warsaw. Polish Chief School (Szkoła



Glówna), founded with four Faculties: Law and Administrative Sciences, Mathematics and Physics, Medicine, Philology, and History.

1867. Lemberg (Lwów). Polish used for teaching some subjects, alongside of German and Ruthenian.

1869. Warsaw. Central School closed. Opening of Imperial University. All subjects taught in Russian only.

1870. Cracow. Polish the only language used in teaching.

1871. Lemberg (Lwów). Two languages recognized for teaching purposes—Polish and Ruthenian.

Since 1879 Polish has been the official language of the University.

1894. Lemberg (Lwów). Faculty of Medicine established and included in the University.

